

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 IO-13

RSR-01 /103 W

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R 202105Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8295

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 4410

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PN, CS

SUBJ: TORRIJOS AND FIGUERES MEET UNANNOUNCED

1. ACCORDING TO PRESS, PANAMANIAN HEAD OF GOVERNMENT OMAR TORRIJOS AND COSTA RICAN PRESIDENT JOSE FIGUERES MET AUGUST 17 FOR MORE THAN THREE HOURS AT A RANCH ON THE COSTA RICAN SIDE OF THE BORDER FOR AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. WHILE PRINCIPAL TOPIC OF THEIR CONVERSATION REPORTEDLY WAS BORDER DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS TO BE FINANCED UNDER UNITED NATIONS AUSPICES, AT LEAST ONE ACCOUNT, A BRIEF EFE (SPANISH WIRE SERVICE) ITEM, HAD IT THAT QUESTION OF GOP SUPPORT FOR A COSTA RICAN SEAT ON THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL AND "CONCERN" OVER DEFAMATORY ANTI-GOP "CAMPAINGS" IN COSTA RICA WERE ALSO DISCUSSED.

2. COMMENT: THE MEETING BETWEEN THE TWO LEADERS WAS CARRIED OFF WITH NO ADVANCE NOTICE AND, AT LEAST LOCALLY, HAS NOT YET BEEN GIVEN EXTENSIVE COVERAGE. THAT FRONTIER DEVELOPMENT PLANS WERE A MAJOR ITEM OF DISCUSSION IS QUITE LIKELY, ALTHOUGH, AS EFE REPORT INDICATES, THERE WAS UNDOUBTEDLY MORE TO IT THAN THAT. WHILE WE HAVE HAD NO PREVIOUS HINTS THAT COSTA RICA WAS AFTER PANAMA'S SECURITY COUNCIL SEAT, THIS
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COULD WELLHAVE BEEN ON THE AGENDA. SO, TOO, MIGHT

HAVE BEEN THE QUESTION OF COSTA RICA'S ATTITUDE TOWARD
THE PANAMANIAN "REVOLUTION." TORRIJOS IS KNOWN TO BE
SENSITIVE TO INTELLIGENCE REPORTS THAT COSTA RICA IS
BEING USED AS A BASE FOR ANTI-GOP PLOTTING AND HE MAY
HAVE WELCOMED A CHANCE TO GET HIS NEIGHBOR'S FACE-TO-FACE
ASSURANCES ON THIS SCORE.
SAYRE

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NNN

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